

STORIES

FOR

Summer Days & Winter Nights.

SECOND SERIES.



THE

WIDOW'S SON.



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PATERNOSTER ROW.

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He struck Jack a heavy blow on the head.

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THE
WIDOW'S SON.



The Widow's Cottage.

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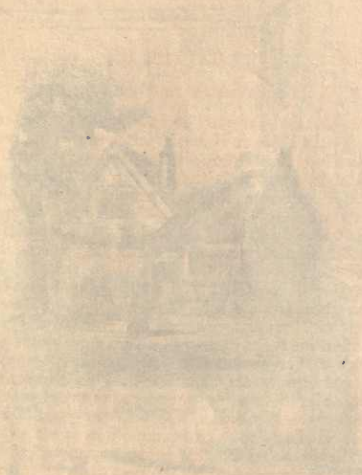
London:

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THE

WIDOW'S SON.



BY

GEORGE ELDER AND SON

PRINTED BY

THE WIDOW'S SON.

CHAPTER I.

A FATHER'S LAST COUNSEL.

JACK HONEST was only eight years of age when his father died. 'Jack Honest!' cries the young reader, 'What!—was the boy's name Honest?' It was—Honest is a surname, though rather an uncommon one. We often wonder how people come by some of the names they have. We are not surprised to hear of Smiths, and Carpenters, and Painters, and Bakers, and Butchers, because such surnames were no doubt given to people who followed those trades. Well, Honest was most likely given to one of our hero's great-grandfathers, who was distinguished for the virtue of Honesty. That is the only way by which we can solve the mystery of how he came by his name. Jack's father and mother were poor, but they had brought him up very creditably. They had sent him to school, and he had never played in the streets with idle or vicious children, which is the ruin of many boys. He had one or two companions of his own age, but they were such as his parents approved of.

A short time before Mr. Honest died, he called his little son to his bedside, and talked to him. He gave him much good advice, and, amongst other things, he said 'I lost *my* father when I was only a year or two older than you are, Jackey, and I am going to tell you something that he said to me. It made a great impression upon my memory, you may

be sure, by my remembering it till my dying day. 'John,' said he, looking me very earnestly in the face, 'never let your actions give the lie to your name.' I was surprised, and almost offended, that he should say such a thing to me, so I replied, 'Why, father, do you think I shall ever become a thief?' Then he told me that there were many ways of being dishonest without being a thief. He said, 'To conceal the truth when it ought to be told, is dishonest—to take advantage of another person's ignorance, is dishonest—to waste time or property which is not our own, is dishonest; and there are a great many other things, beside what I have mentioned, which people often do without thinking that they are doing very wrong either.' Now, my dear boy,' Mr. Honest added, 'I want you to take heed to this advice, as I hope I have done. I can promise you, that if you do, it will make you a happy man, though it is possible it may not make you a rich one. However, I am sure that there is nothing lost in the end by doing what is right; for God sends his blessing on honest upright actions.'

The sick man then spoke to Jack about the duty he owed to his mother. 'When I am gone,' he said, 'you must do all you can to make up for my loss. You are but a little boy now, still you may do something—you can be kind to her, and attentive to her wishes; and when you grow older, you must work for her, and do all you can to make her life happy.' Jack cried a good deal when his father spoke of dying, and of leaving him and his mother alone, but he promised that he would follow the good advice which he had given him.

As Mr. Honest had been a steady man, and his wife was a careful well-managing woman, they had put by a little money; so though the widow was of course in great grief at the loss of her husband, she and Jack were not left wholly without means for

their support. Some of the neighbours advised her to open a little shop, and they promised to deal with her if she did so. She took their advice, and laid out her money in that way. For two or three years the shop answered very well. It brought in profits enough to keep them very comfortably, and Jack was still sent to school; but after a while a dashing new shop was opened a few doors off, and Mrs. Honest, in consequence, lost many of her customers. Then the poor woman began to be very anxious; for when her rent became due, and her landlord came for it, she had not got the money to pay it; and when the time came for her to settle her accounts with the wholesale dealers she had her goods of, she had not enough to meet their demands, for most of the articles were still in her shop unsold. All this was a great trouble to Jack as well as to his mother, for he was a thoughtful boy, and was almost as much concerned at being in debt as she was; besides which, he was very much grieved to see her look distressed and unhappy again. 'Jackey, my dear,' she said to him one evening, when they were sitting together, 'You are now nearly eleven years old, and I have been thinking, that if you could serve in the shop, I could earn a few shillings a week by getting up fine linen. I would go round to the gentlefolks in the neighbourhood, and ask them to give me some employment in that way.'

'That's a capital thought, mother,' cried Jack, 'I could take care of the shop very well, I think.'

'But you would have to give up going to school.'

'Yes, mother, and I shall be sorry for that; still you have been kind enough to send me to school for a good many years, and now it is time that I did something to help you. Besides, I need not give up learning altogether; I can read and write and cypher in my over time.'

'You are a very good boy, Jackey,' said Mrs.

Honest. 'Well, we will try this plan. We must do our best, and then look to God for his blessing.'

A few days after, Jack took up his station behind the counter. He was so civil to the customers that every body liked him; but I must tell you, dear young reader, one very important thing he did—that was, he was very particular to weigh and measure everything very exactly. He had not forgotten his father's dying counsel—he had already tried to follow it in every way he could, but now his honesty was put to the test constantly. He thought to himself, 'If I give my mother's customers a little short weight or measure, my mother would have a little more profit on her goods; but then that would be dishonest, and be an offence in the sight of God.' Then he thought, 'If I am careless, or in too great a hurry when I am weighing or measuring an article, I cannot be strictly honest, for I must injure either my mother or her customers.' So by these means he made a very excellent little shopman.

CHAPTER II.

AN ADVENTURE AND A TRIAL OF HONESTY.

THE widow's plan succeeded very well, and she and Jack got a comfortable living again. But in the course of a few months another trouble came on. Poor Mrs. Honest was taken ill of a fever. She was so bad for some weeks that she was not expected to live, and was obliged to have a person to wait on her; for though Jack would have cheerfully done his best to nurse her, he was wanted to take charge of the shop. The customers now became fewer, for many were afraid to come to the house lest they should catch the fever. However, a few of the ladies who had employed Mrs. Honest were very kind to her, and sent her some little help, so she did not want for anything whilst she was ill. But when she got over the fever she was not able to take to washing and ironing again, because the disease had brought her into a sad state of weakness; indeed it appeared to have injured her so much, that there was very little hope of her ever being quite strong again, and able to work as she had done. Once more there was not enough money to pay the rent and meet the demands of the tradespeople, and poor Mrs. Honest could form no fresh plan to get out of her difficulties. She did not despair, however; she said that they must trust in the good providence of God, and hope that something would turn up for their relief.

One afternoon Mrs. Honest sent Jack on an errand to take a bill to a person who owed her a little money, but when he got to the place he found the person was gone away, no one knew where. The bill did

not amount to quite a pound, still it was a large sum for the widow to lose in her present circumstances, and poor Jack was in great trouble, and dreaded going back with the ill news.

As he was walking along the road looking very sorrowful, he saw a carriage with two ladies and a gentleman in it coming up, 'Ah,' thought he, 'these people are rich, and they would not miss that little sum.' This thought made him a little envious, but the feeling was gone the next moment, and seeing a gate just before, he ran on to open it that the



coachman might not have to stop the carriage and get down. The gentleman drew out his purse and threw him a piece of money. Jack bowed, but stood holding the gate back with his other hand till the carriage had gone on, before he stooped down to pick it up.

'Surely it is gold,' cried he as he saw it glittering in the sunshine. He was not mistaken; it was a sovereign. Oh! 'joyful, joyful,' cried Jack, 'This is to make up for my poor mother's loss.' But his joy was only for a moment or two; his second thought was, 'surely the gentleman did not mean to throw a sovereign to me. He thought he was giving to me a sixpence or a shilling. It is scarcely likely that any one would throw a sovereign to a boy for opening a gate. At all events it would not be honest to keep it without asking whether he meant it for me. Then he remembered his father's words. It is not honest to take advantage of another person's ignorance. The carriage was still within sight, though it was a good distance on, so he began to run and shout out, 'Hoy, hoy.' No one heard him, however, and then it turned an angle in the road. Just at this moment a man came up, and Jack thinking that he could perhaps tell him who the gentleman was that had just passed him in the carriage, and that he could find some means of seeing him if he did not live far off, stopped him and asked the question, but without stating his reason for doing so.

'Why it was 'Squire Brooksby, don't you know him?' returned the man.

'No, I don't,' replied Jack, and 'I shall be much obliged to you if you will tell me where he lives.'

'Why he lives at the great house there, on 'tother side the common. But what do you want with him, if you don't know him?' he asked.

Jack felt that he was not exactly called upon to state the circumstance to a stranger; he thought also that if he were a dishonest man he might try to take the money from him as they were quite alone in a lonely road. So he said, 'Oh! I have some business I want to see him about. Thank you for telling me,' and he walked briskly on. . . .

When Jack got home, he told his mother of his

ill-success, and then of his adventure. He did not at once tell her quite all, and what he meant to do, for he thought he would hear what she would say first. He felt pretty sure, however, that she would think the same as he did. And he was right.

'Oh! my dear boy,' she cried, 'we must not keep that money. The gentleman never could have meant to give you so large a sum as that.'

'I thought so, mother,' said Jack, and then he told her the rest of his story. . . .

The good woman was so affected at this proof of her son's right principle that she burst into tears. 'That is just what your dear father would have done Jackey,' she said, throwing her arms round his neck and kissing him. 'You deserve to bear his name. Oh! I shall never, never think myself unhappy whilst I have such a son,' she added, 'we will still trust in God's goodness. He will take care of us as long as we look up to Him and do what is right.'

CHAPTER III.

JACK'S RECEPTION AT THE HALL.

JACK proposed going to 'Squire Brooksby's in the morning before it was likely the Squire would be gone out, and as his mother was quite willing, he got up early and made himself as clean and neat as he could. He had never been into a large house in his life, and he felt rather awkward at the thought of going and asking to see a stranger ; for his mother thought it would be best for him to ask to see the gentleman himself in case the servants should not carry his message as he wished. His mother tried to give him courage, by telling him he was going on an errand, he need not be ashamed of, and then he laughed at his own foolishness.

It was a beautiful bright morning, and he went whistling along and putting his hand in his pocket every minute or two to feel if his piece of gold was safe. At length he came to the lodge-gate, for there was a park and an avenue of tall trees before the house. The gate-keeper asked him several questions before he would let him pass, for he had orders not to admit any one into the grounds who would not state their business. So Jack told what his errand was, and to show that what he said was the truth, he drew out the sovereign. The man looked surprised, but pleased. 'Well, you are an honest boy,' he said, 'I'll let you pass certainly, go to the end of the grove, and then turn to the right, you will see a side-door, ring the bell, and you may say I told you to ask to see the 'Squire if you like.'

'Thank you,' said Jack, and he bounded joyfully on. At the end of the avenue was a very large and

handsome house, with a broad flight of steps, and a terrace above, which led to the principal door. Jack tried to count the windows, but there were so many that they quite confused him, and he could not count them. 'This gentleman must be very rich to live in such a great house,' he said to himself, 'a sovereign must be very little to him; still if he did not mean to give it to me, I have no right to keep it. What he has, has nothing to do with the matter; it is as much my duty to return it, as if he were a poor man.' And Jack reasoned quite right, my dear reader. It is very wrong to say that there is no harm in robbing the rich, though people will sometimes say so.

Jack went as he had been directed, and seeing the door, pulled the bell, his heart beating a little quicker than usual as he listened to the sound it made. A footman answered, and then Jack said what the man at the lodge had told him to say. 'I suppose you are come to see master about the situation,' said the servant, eyeing him a little curiously. 'I'm afraid you are not tall enough, my man; but you shall see Mr. Brooksby in a few minutes, if you'll sit down,' he added, pointing to a seat. Jack was just going to reply that he had not come about a situation, but the footman went off, so he sat down on a chair in the lobby, and once more thrust his hand into his pocket to feel whether his gold was safe.

In a few minutes the servant re-appeared. 'Come here, my boy,' he said, beckoning to him and smiling good-humouredly. 'Master's at breakfast, but he says he'll see you.'

Jack got up in great haste and in some agitation. He felt a sort of choking in his throat, but he said to himself, 'What a foolish fellow I am!—what have I to be afraid of?' He followed the servant down a passage: at the end was a door opening into a very large and beautifully furnished apartment, and never

having seen anything of the kind before, it appeared to him more like one of the enchanted palaces he had read of in fairy tales, than anything real. A gentleman and lady were sitting at a table, on which the breakfast was spread, and they smiled at the amazement which the boy's countenance expressed as he entered the room. Politeness was, however, natural to Jack; and bewildered as he was, he did not forget himself so far as not to make a bow.



‘So you want a situation, my lad,’ said the gentleman.

‘No, sir, I am not come about a situation, but I was bold enough to ask to see you, sir, because——’

‘Why, surely I have seen you before,’ said Mr. Brooksby, starting as if a thought had suddenly crossed his mind.

‘Yes, sir,’ Jack replied—and his throat was clearer now—‘You saw me yesterday afternoon, in the road

on the other side of the common. I opened a gate for your carriage to pass, sir, and you threw me this'—holding out the sovereign. 'I thought, directly I saw what it was, that you must have thrown it to me by mistake; so I called after you, and ran after you, but I couldn't make you hear, so I have brought it to you now, sir.'

The lady and gentleman looked at each other, and then at the poor boy, and they looked very much pleased.

'What is your name, my lad?' asked Mr. Brooksby.

'John Honest, sir.'

'Honest! did you say? Why, then you are honest by name, and honest by nature.'

'Yes, sir, I hope so. My father and mother have always taught me to be honest.'

'Ah! I should think you had been well taught. Who is your father?'

'My father is dead, sir. He died about three years ago; but my mother lives in the vale yonder: she keeps a little shop in the village, sir.'

'I did give you the sovereign by mistake,' said Mr. Brooksby; 'I thought it was a shilling, for it was mixed with some silver, and I did not look at it; but I found out my mistake afterward, and I did not expect ever to see it again.'

'I am afraid there are not many boys who would have had the honesty to bring it back to you,' said the lady; 'but I daresay your good mother has taught you, that if we keep what we know is not our own, it is just the same thing in the sight of God as if we had stolen it,' she added, turning to Jack.

'Yes, ma'am, she has, and so did my dear father,' he replied bowing.

'It is a great blessing to have had good parents to teach you what is right,' said the lady. 'I have no doubt you think so, and that you thank God for it.'

'Yes, ma'am, I do indeed,' Jack replied very

earnestly. He had laid the sovereign down on the table before Mr. Brooksby, but that gentleman, smiling and nodding, said, 'Put the money back into your pocket, my lad. I give it you *now*.'

Jack looked up in his face, but did not offer to take it up. 'Thank, you, sir,' he said, after a little hesitation, 'but I should not like to take it now. It would be taking a reward for being honest, and mother says we ought to be honest without any reward. No, sir, if you will be good enough to give me the shilling you meant to give me at first instead, I'll take that and be glad; for my mother is very poor.'

'This is a noble-minded boy,' observed the lady in a low tone to her husband. 'Give him the shilling now, but we must not lose sight of him.'

'Well, as you are so very scrupulous, here is a shilling,' said Mr. Brooksby.

Jack received it with another low bow.

'You like sweet cakes, I dare say,' said the lady; 'if so, take some out of that plate; perhaps you are hungry after your walk.'

'No, ma'am, I'm not hungry, thank you,' he answered; 'but if you will give me leave, I will take one of the cakes home to my mother. She has been very ill, and she cannot eat common victuals now, and she would like one of these nice cakes, I think.'

'You are a very good boy to think of your poor mother, so you shall have them all if you like,' the lady rejoined.

'I thank you, ma'am. I wont say no to that,' said Jack, his eyes brightening with pleasure. 'Here I've got a nice clean handkerchief in my pocket. Mother gave it me this morning when I came out. I'll tie them up in that, if you please, ma'am.'

'So you shall, and if your handkerchief will hold them, we will put these little tarts in too. Shall we?'

Jack smiled, and he began to contrive a little that he might find room for the tarts.

‘You say your mother is very poor, and that she is ill, too,’ said Mr. Brooksby. ‘Now, would not this sovereign you have refused be of great service to her?’

‘Yes, sir, indeed it would; for she is in great trouble for want of money just now—but—but I don’t like to be paid for being honest, and doing what was only my duty, sir.’

‘Well, well, it shall be so then,’ said the gentleman, as he put the piece of gold back into his purse. ‘Perhaps we shall call and see your mother some day before long. We shan’t forget your name, I promise you.’ Jack smiled, and after making another bow, he went out of the room.

CHAPTER IV.

A VISIT FROM THE SQUIRE'S LADY.

JACK went home very well pleased with his morning's adventure. He was pleased with the kind reception he had met with, and he was pleased with what he had seen. He was delighted, too, to be laden with nice things for his mother; and though they smelt very savoury and looked very tempting, he would not bite a bit out of one of them. But more than all he felt happy because he knew he had done what was right. There is no satisfaction so great as that we feel when we have done right.

Jack's tongue ran very fast when he got home. The first thing he did was to open his handkerchief and display his good things—then he told his story. He was so much pleased with the gentleman and lady he had been introduced to, especially with Mrs. Brooksby, that he could not help talking about them all the rest of the day. He said he thought her the prettiest lady he had ever seen in his life, 'Excepting you, mother,' he added, looking up in her face and smoothing the few hairs which peeped from under her widow's cap.

'But you don't call me a lady, Jackey,' said Mrs. Honest, smiling.

'You would be a lady if you were dressed like one, mother,' he replied.

'No, I should never be a lady, Jackey; it is not dress that makes a lady. It is being brought up amongst gentlefolks, and being taught good manners, and having a good education, that makes gentlemen and ladies.'

Jack could not at all see why his mother could never be a lady. He said he meant to keep her without doing anything when he was a little older, and then he should like to see her dressed in a silk gown. 'And I am sure,' he added, 'you will look like a lady then.'

Two days after, as Jack was serving in the shop, he heard the sound of carriage wheels not far off. It was not often that a carriage passed that way, because their little house stood in a lane turning out of the high road. Jack's thoughts were full of his new friends, and he concluded it must be the squire and his lady coming to see them. He was not far from right, for the next minute the carriage stopped at the door, and Mrs. Brooksby got out of it, and came into the shop.

'Ha! you are very busy, I see,' she said, smiling and nodding to him. 'That is right. How is your mother, my good boy?'

'Mother's very poorly, ma'am. Will you walk in and see her? She is in here,' he replied, and as he spoke, he opened the door leading to their little sitting-room behind the shop. The widow was sitting in an easy chair beside the fire. She was evidently very weak, and her face was very pale, but she tried to get up when the lady entered.

'Don't disturb yourself, I pray,' cried Mrs. Brooksby, taking the chair which Jack was placing for her by the side of his mother's. 'I am sorry to see you looking so ill.'

'I have been very ill, indeed—keeping my bed for weeks, but I am getting better now, ma'am,' Mrs. Honest said, in a low faint voice.

'Yes, it is strength you want, I see. Well, my good woman,' she added, 'you have a great blessing in your son'—Jack had left the room to go back to the shop by this time—'Mr. Brooksby and I,' she continued, 'were very much pleased with the manner

in which he acted about the sovereign that was thrown him by mistake. We are looking out for a lad to assist the footman, and we should like to take him into our employ very much, if you would like to part with him. Though he is not quite so old as we could wish, he will be getting over that disadvantage every day, you know,' she added smiling.

'You are very kind, ma'am,' replied the widow, 'and I should like my dear boy to have such a comfortable situation, if it should please God to take me from him; but I don't know how to part with him whilst I live. I have nothing to keep me but my little shop, and I am not able to serve in it myself now; besides which, I am a lone widow. I have nothing on earth to love but my dear boy.'

'Yes I see—I see, my good friend,' said the lady, wiping a tear from her eye. 'There would be no kindness in taking him from you—nay, it would be cruel to do so.'

'Ah, ma'am, it is very good of you to say so,' said the widow. 'Some gentlefolks think that we poor people haven't got the same kind of feelings as they have themselves, and they are offended if we don't like to do what they think will be for our good. But my dear Jackey is everything to me. He is all my comfort.'

'I don't wonder at your being unwilling to part with so good a son,' said the lady. 'I could not wish you to do such a thing in the state of health you are in, but we must see what can be done to get up your strength. Now, do tell me,' she added, looking very kindly at her, 'if there is any other way in which we can help you.'

'You are so good, ma'am, that I think I will tell you all my trouble,' said the widow.

'Ah! that is just what I wish you to do,' cried the lady, 'but tell it quietly, in your own way. I am

not in a hurry ; I am out this morning for the purpose of paying you a visit.'

Mrs. Honest, thus kindly encouraged, stated the difficulties she was in, in consequence of her long illness and the losses she had had. All this made the lady feel more surprised and pleased at their good principle. When people are in circumstances of great want, they are sometimes tempted to do what they would not do at another time, but it ought not to be so, for no circumstances can alter wrong into right, or justify us in doing evil that good may come.

Mrs. Brooksby said she would send some nourishing things by one of her servants for the invalid, and she begged her not to make herself unhappy about her little debts, for that Mr. Brooksby and herself would help her to settle them. As she went back through the shop, she put a crown-piece into Jack's hand, smiling and saying, he was to spend it just as he pleased.

'Oh ! I shall spend it, ma'am, in getting something to do my mother good,' he answered.

'You need not do that,' said the lady; 'I am going to send some nice things—you may spend it on yourself.'

'Then I'll give it to her to help to pay her debts with, if you please ma'am,' Jack added.

'That is a good boy, I like to hear you say that,' she said, you are honest in every way. However,' she added, 'suppose Mr. Brooksby and I pay all your mother's debts for her, what will you do then ?'

'Then I'll put this five shillings into a savings' bank, and I'll add all I can to it so as to make up a good sum of money that my poor mother may never want any more.'

'That is a very good idea. When we are not in debt to any one, it is quite right to save if we can,

if it be ever so little, for a time of sickness or want.—But how do you think you can add to your little store ?

‘ Oh ! I am getting a big boy now, ma’am,’ Jack replied, ‘ and I hope I shall be able to take some situation, and keep my mother soon.’

The lady again expressed her approval, and then she stepped into her carriage and it drove off.

CHAPTER V.

KIND OFFERS FROM NEW FRIENDS, AND A NEW HOME.

MRS. BROOKSBY came to see Mrs. Honest again in a few days, and then she gave her the means to get her debts settled. They amounted to but a few pounds altogether, so she and Jack were relieved of that trouble. The lady then made a proposal to the widow, which she and Mr. Brooksby had been talking over together that morning. This was, that Jack should enter their service, and that his mother should live in one of the little cottages on their estate. The lady said that Mr. Brooksby had had some little houses built on purpose for two or three of his late father's servants who had grown old in the service of the family, and that one of them was now vacant.

She said that they would pay Jack liberal wages, and allow her a small sum yearly, which, together with a house rent-free, would be enough to keep her in comfort. 'Then,' added the lady, 'you may get stronger in time and be able to earn a little to increase your income, and we will not part you and your son; he shall come to you every night after his day's duty is over, and he shall spend nearly the whole of his Sundays with you. The cottage is not many minutes' walk from the hall.'

Mrs. Honest was more thankful than she could express at this kind offer—indeed she felt too grateful to speak at all, she burst into tears of joy. But Jack's delight shewed itself in other ways, he capered about the house looking the very picture of happiness. And he could think and talk of nothing else but the good gentlefolks at the hall.

The cottage, which was to be the widow's home, was small ; there were but four rooms in it, but it was very pretty, and comfortably fitted up. Mr. Brooksby was one of those liberal-minded gentlemen who liked to see poor people in comfortable houses, and he encouraged all his tenants to make their homes as tasteful as they could. He did not wish to see poor people trying to vie with the rich, but he liked to see them have a few simple articles as decorations to their rooms, as well as what was absolutely necessary for their use. He thought that cultivating such taste improved people's character, and made them more fond of their homes ; so he often made his tenants presents of things of that sort. The cottage had a pretty little parlour with papered walls, representing jessamine running up trellis-work, so as you sat in it you might almost fancy yourself in a green-house. The window of this room looked upon a field where sheep were grazing, and a beautiful oak tree stood just by, and stretched its broad arms over the roof. The room was very neatly furnished too, and there were three pictures in gilt frames hanging over the chimney-piece, and pretty muslin curtains at the window, and flower pots in a rustic basket, with some flourishing plants in them. Behind was a little kitchen furnished with everything that a small family would be likely to want, and the window of that room looked out upon a good-sized garden which was well stocked with vegetables, and which had narrow beds on each side the walks filled with flowers. Then above were two neat bed-rooms ; the one in front, being rather the largest and best, was for Mrs. Honest, and the back one was for Jack.

The widow disposed of the good-will of her shop, as it is called, and also her furniture, excepting a few things she wished to keep for old acquaintance sake. People often get attached to articles of furniture

which they have had a great many years, especially if they remind them of any one who was very dear to them, and that person is away or dead. Mrs. Honest would rather have gone without food than have parted with the old arm chair that her dear husband used to sit in in the winter's evenings, when they gathered round the fire, and she loved the old clock too, that had so long told them how fast time flew, and she kept these and a few other things that were not of much worth in themselves, but only valuable for the feelings and thoughts that were connected with them.

The little sum of money she got for the things she sold, she put into the savings' bank ; for she thought that it might enable her to apprentice Jack to some trade when he should be fourteen.

Jack set about his duties with a very cheerful spirit. Some of the things he had to do were not exactly pleasant, and some were a little difficult at first—for he had not been used to work of that kind—but nothing seemed hard to him, he thought it a pleasure to work for such a kind master and mistress. After awhile, however, he had a trouble to bear which he little expected.

CHAPTER VI.

CHANGES—A FRESH OFFER TO JACK.

THE foreign post one morning brought Mr. Brooksby a letter, bordered and sealed with black, which threw the family into great trouble. It contained news of the death of one of Mr. Brooksby's brothers. This gentleman had been living in America for a great many years. He and his wife had gone over there when he was quite a young man; but his wife had died three years before, leaving a son and a little daughter. The boy was now about twelve years old, and the girl not quite four, for she was quite a baby when her poor mamma died, and these orphan children were consigned to the care of Mr. and Mrs. Brooksby. They were already on their journey to England, under the charge of an old negress who had lived with the family ever since they had settled in America, so preparations were immediately made for their reception. Mr. and Mrs. Brooksby meant to have the children to live with them, and to treat them just as if they were their own. They had never had any children of their own. A nursery was fitted up for Miss Rosa, and Master Lionel was to have his suit of rooms and a tutor. His kind uncle thought he would be happier if he lived with them than at a boarding school. When the rooms were fitted up, Mr. Brooksby asked Jack if he would like to be Master Lionel's servant instead of helping the footman as he did then. He said that if he would like it he might. Jack was quite pleased with the proposal. He felt a great deal for the poor boy, for he well remembered his own grief at losing his father; he had often thought that if it had pleased God to

take both his parents, his condition would have been very deplorable. So he thought he should like to wait on this young gentleman.

Mr. Brooksby said to him, 'You may, perhaps, find Master Lionel rather hard to please sometimes. I don't know that he is so, but I expect he has had his own way a great deal, and he has been used to have slaves to order about him; so you must take all this into consideration before you decide on changing your office, that you may not be disappointed and repent of it afterward.'

'Oh! I am sure I shan't repent of it, sir,' Jack replied; for his warm feelings of gratitude led him to think that he could bear with any thing from a person who belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Brooksby's family.

When he was alone he began to wonder what Mr. Brooksby could have meant by saying that Master Lionel had been used to have slaves about him to order. So in the evening when he went to his mother, he asked her if she knew. 'Yes, my dear,' she answered, 'many of the rich people in America, (and in some other places as well) have a number of black men and women waiting on them, and working on their estates as Mr. Brooksby has you and all his other servants in his house and on his grounds; only instead of being hired, and paid wages, and being able to go away and engage themselves to another master if they please, as servants can in England, they are considered their master's property, and are called slaves. The master reckons them as much a part of his property as his horses and sheep, or whatever other live creatures he may have, and his slaves can never leave him unless he choose to sell them to another person.'

'Oh! mother, and is that right?' exclaimed Jack, looking greatly surprised and shocked.

'No, it cannot be right, my dear boy,' Mrs. Honest

replied ; ' God never meant that one man should sell his fellow-man as he does his cattle. But if this young gentleman has been taught to think there is no harm in it, you must be careful what you say Jack, or you will give him offence.'

' Oh ! I wont offend him,' Jack returned, ' I'm not likely to offend any one called by the name of Brooksby ; but I wont promise you that I wont tell him that it is not right to keep slaves ; I think it would but be honest to do it.'

' Well, I don't know, my dear. If you thought you could do any good by it, it would certainly be right to say out the truth, but it will not be your place to teach him, but to wait on him. You know his uncle and aunt, and his tutor will tell him what is right.'

Here the conversation ended, but Jack thought about it for a long while.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ARRIVAL.—JACK'S NEW MASTER.

WHEN Mr. Brooksby thought that the vessel in which his nephew and niece were would reach England, he set out for the sea-port town of Liverpool to meet them. The children had enjoyed the voyage very much, for every thing they saw was new to them, and that had taken off their grief for the loss of their father a little.

Little Rosa's black nurse, Mabel, was a kind-hearted and faithful creature, who was much attached to the family, though she was a slave. That is she was a slave when she left America, for she was included in the property Mr. William Brooksby left his son; but she was no longer a slave when she set her foot on English ground. Slavery is not allowed in England, or in any of our colonies now. Our laws forbid it.

“They touch our country and their shackles fall.”

The children were much pleased to see their uncle, and with all they saw in England, and little Rosa sat on Mr. Brooksby's knee in the carriage, and prattled nearly all the journey.

Mrs. Brooksby was looking out anxiously for their arrival, and so was Jack; for he considered the young gentleman as his new master. When the carriage drove up the avenue, he looked as glad as if he had been going to see some relations of his own. He ran out to the door, and made himself very busy in carrying in the trunks.

Master Lionel was the first to jump out of the carriage. He was a tall boy for his age, and rather

handsome, but there was something in his countenance which was not altogether pleasing. It was a curl of the lip which seemed to express contempt.

'You have a fine old mansion here, uncle,' he said, standing erect and taking a deliberate survey of the Hall. 'Ah! I've heard my father speak of it many times. He was born here.'

'Yes, my dear Lionel,' said Mr. Brooksby, who was just then lifting little Rosa out of the carriage, 'He was born in that room,' pointing to one of the upper windows.

'Oh! let us go in and see aunt. I do so want to see aunt,' cried the little girl, catching hold of her brother's hand, and looking first at him and then at her uncle.

Mr. Brooksby smiled. 'Well,' he said, 'we will go in when Lionel has done admiring the outside of the house, for I fancy your aunt is as eager to see you as you are to see her.'

'Oh, I'm quite ready,' said the young gentleman.

'Stop one moment,' cried Mr. Brooksby, who now caught sight of Jack. 'This lad, Lionel,' he added, 'is to be your man Friday. You have read of Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday, I suppose? Well, his name is John Honest, and you'll find him true to his name, I promise you.'

'Oh, then, you will look after my trunks, and see that they are put into my dressing-room,' said the young gentleman.

'Yes, sir,' Jack replied, bowing.

'Take particular care of the one marked No. 5. If you drop it, you will do a pretty deal of mischief. Do you hear, boy?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Boys are very careless sometimes,' he added, turning to his uncle. 'There are all my mathematical instruments in that box.'

'Boys!' Jack murmured to himself, 'Well, he is

a little taller than I am, but I think mistress told me he is only a few months older.'

'George will help you to carry the trunks, Jack, they are too heavy for you to manage alone,' said Mr. Brooksby kindly. He then went up the flight of steps which led to the front entrance, leading his nephew by one hand and his niece by the other.

The windows of the dining room opened upon the terrace. Mrs. Brooksby had been sitting in that room, and she now came out with open arms. She was too eager to fold the dear children to her heart to wait for any ceremony. Lionel kissed her very affectionately, and said he was sure that she and his uncle would try to make up for the dear parents they had lost; but from the way he spoke, it seemed as if he had prepared his speech beforehand. Not so little Rosa: she laughed, and cried, and hugged her aunt by turns, but she did not speak a word.

Some refreshment was already on the table for the travellers, but Master Lionel said he could not eat anything till he had seen that his trunks were quite safe. 'My servants will take care of everything—they don't need looking after,' said Mr. Brooksby; 'and as to that little Jack Honest, he is a *gem*. I'll tell you the story some day of how we came to know him first. I assure you we prize him, and that you are well off in having him for a man Friday.'

'Well, uncle,' replied the young gentleman, holding his head up higher than usual, 'I am much obliged to you for giving me your *gem*; but I don't think it is well to make too much of servants, they are sure to presume upon your kindness.'

'Jack will never do that, my dear,' said Mrs. Brooksby. 'He knows how to keep his station. I hope you will treat him with kindness,' she added, 'for he is prepared to devote himself to you. First, because your name is Brooksby; and further because you have lost your dear father:—and he knows what it is to lose a father.'

'Oh, I don't want to be pitied, aunt,' he returned. 'I am very grateful for *your* sympathy and kindness, but I don't want to be pitied by servants.'

'Well, my dear boy, I think sympathy is not to be despised from any one,' said the lady. 'We are all members of one great human family, you know; but we won't settle that point now. Sit down and take a sandwich, or shall I give you a slice of fowl?'

'I can't eat till I see that my trunks are all safe, indeed, aunt,' he replied.

'Well, then, I will ring for a servant to show you to your rooms. Now, darling,' she added, turning to little Rosa, 'you will have a tart, won't you?'

The little girl smiled and took a tart, but she did not attempt to eat it, but sat looking up in her aunt's face.

'Have I got a little dumb girl here?' asked the lady, looking first at the child, and then at Mr. Brooksby.

'Oh no! I'll answer for that,' he cried. 'Her tongue has run so fast all the way. But I suppose that is the reason why it is quiet now,' he added, patting Rosa's cheek. 'It is tired—is it so?'

'No, no, I am not tired,' she now murmured out, 'but I like to look at aunt. Oh! I wish she would let me call her mamma,' she added with great earnestness. 'I should so like to call her mamma, and to love her dearly.'

Mrs. Brooksby was affected to tears; and once more folding her little niece in her arms, she said, 'You shall call me mamma if you like, darling. I will indeed be a mother to you.'

CHAPTER VIII.

LITTLE ROSA AND HER BLACK NURSE, AND A VISIT TO THE WIDOW'S COTTAGE.

POOR JACK was wofully disappointed in his young master. He would gladly have been under the footman once more, but he did not like to say so. He did not even hint at his trouble to any one, excepting his mother. She said all she could to cheer him, and encourage him to do his duty, and she said he must hope that the young gentleman would improve on further acquaintance.

About a week after the arrival of the orphans, Jack went up to Mrs. Brooksby as she was walking in the garden one morning, and said he had a very great favour to ask.

'Well, what is it?' said the lady, smiling. She had always got a smile for Jack, and she treated him more kindly than ever now she saw that he was not quite so happy as he used to be.

'Oh it's a *very* great favour. It is, that you will let me take Miss Rosa to see my mother. Mother would so like to see her, and Miss says she would like to see mother.'

'Then you and Miss Rosa are good friends, I suppose,' she cried.

'Oh yes! ma'am, she's such a sweet little lady, who could help loving her? I've talked to mother about her so much—for I could not help it, I like her so much—and mother said I might ask you to let me bring her to the cottage for an hour. I'll take such care of her.'

'I don't doubt that, Jack,' the lady returned, but you wont mind having good old Mabel with you.

Mabel and Miss Rosa shall go to your mother's cottage under your protection, for an hour, if you like.'

'Oh! thank you, thank you, ma'am,' he cried. 'No; I like Mabel: she is a kind good creature, though she is black.'

'Though she is black, Jack! why, you don't suppose any one is the worse for having a black skin, do you?'

'No, ma'am, no; mother says our hearts are all alike, whether we be white or black.'

'To be sure, Jack. We are all God's family, and we ought to love one another more than we do. But there is Mabel and little Rosy just coming out for a walk; you may run and ask them if they would like to go now.'

'Then will you be pleased to tell Master Lionel that I am absent with your leave?' Jack asked.



‘Oh yes, I’ll settle that.’

Jack bowed, and ran off highly delighted. Little Rosa had grown very fond of him, and she was quite pleased with the thought of seeing his mother. Jack was a favourite of Mabel’s too ; she did not, therefore, raise any objections, so they set off for the cottage in company. As they went along, Jack did all he could to amuse his little charge. He ran about seeking for the most beautiful wild flowers he could find, then he tried to think of some pleasant stories to tell her. When they were within sight of the cottage, he asked her and Mabel to be kind enough to stop for a minute whilst he ran in to tell his mother that they were coming. So the little lady sat down on the grass, and said she would make a wreath of the flowers Jack had gathered for her, and put it round her bonnet. ‘Then I shall be so smart,’ she added, laughing.

Mrs. Honest was much pleased to hear that Jack had brought the sweet little lady, as he called her, to see her, and she went out herself to fetch her into the parlour. Rosa was soon at home with her, and no one could take her for a dumb girl then.

She would have stopped at the cottage all day, she was so much pleased with her new acquaintance; but Jack did not forget that Mrs. Brooksby had only given him leave to keep her for an hour, and he would not overstay the time. Whenever he felt tempted to do anything of the kind, he always thought of his father’s dying words. ‘To waste time or property that is not our own is dishonest.’

‘Come, Miss Rosy,’ he said, looking up at the old clock which was clicking in a corner of the room, ‘Come we must go back to the hall now, if you please, for our time is up.’

‘Yes, else missus no let Miss Rosy come see Jack’s moder any more,’ said Mabel.

‘Oh ! Mabel, you should not say so to Miss Rosa,’

cried Jack, 'you should say you must keep your time because you were told to do so, and because God bids children obey their parents, and those who have the rule over them.'

'Well, me tink you right Jack,' replied the old woman, smiling good-humouredly, 'why you good as parson,' she added.

'Mother has taught me that,' said Jack, looking gratefully up in his mother's face, 'and I've read it in the Bible too.'

'Me no read Bible,' said Mabel, shaking her head sorrowfully. 'Nobody taught poor Mabel to read Bible.'

'Cannot you read? Oh! what a sad thing,' cried Mrs. Honest. 'But the Squire and his lady are so good, I am sure they will let you learn to read now if you wish it, she added.

'No, me too old to learn now.'

'Oh! no you are not too old,' cried Jack, 'I've heard of people older than you are learning to read. I would teach you if I might.'

Mabel, however, repeated, 'No, me too old to learn;' and Jack whose eyes were once again raised to the clock, said, 'we will talk about that another time,—we must go,—good bye mother.'

Little Rosa threw her arms round Mrs. Honest's neck, saying, 'Good bye Jack's mother. I'll ask aunt to let me come and see you again soon.' Then she took her black nurse by the hand and tripped away.

CHAPTER IX.

FRESH TROUBLES.

ONE morning, a week or two after, as Jack was busy putting away a number of little articles which his new master had left on his dressing-table, the young gentleman came running back into the room in a great hurry, saying, 'Where's the pin I left there? I forgot to put it in.'

'I have not seen any pin, sir,' Jack replied.

'Not seen any pin! what do you mean by saying that? you must have seen it. I left it not ten minutes ago, sticking in the pincushion.'

'You could not have left it here, Master Lionel, or I must have seen it,' said Jack. 'I have been standing here putting the things into the dressing-case ever since you went out of the room.'

'I tell you, I did leave it there,' cried the young gentleman, now growing very angry, 'What do you mean by contradicting me, you impertinent fellow. You have stolen my pin.'

'I stolen your pin!' exclaimed Jack, in his turn, growing very warm. 'I'll let you know, Master Lionel, that I am not to be accused of thieving in this house. Ask Mr. Brooksby if he thinks I have stolen it.'

'Oh! my uncle is too kind to you, and you fancy you can do as you please with him; but he'll find you out some day. Give me my pin instantly, or I'll expose you to the whole house.'

'Expose me! I have nothing to fear from you,' Jack replied.

'What do you mean by repeating my words, fellow?' cried Lionel.

‘What do you mean by accusing an honest boy of being a thief?’ demanded Jack. ‘I can tell you, sir, you are not amongst your slaves now,’ he added.

‘Insolent fellow, you shall repent of this,’ cried the young gentleman, and raising his arm, he struck Jack a heavy blow on the head, which brought him to the ground. Jack cried out, and the noise of his cry and his fall together drew several persons to the spot; amongst others, Mabel and little Rosa, who happened to be passing the end of the passage at the time.

‘Oh brother, naughty brother, have you hurt poor Jack?’ cried the child bursting into tears, and running up to him.

‘Jack’s head had struck against one of the legs of the dressing-table, and he was still lying on the floor with his face streaming with blood.

‘Go along with you, Rosa; he is a thief; he don’t deserve pity,’ exclaimed Lionel.

‘Jack no tief, me tink,’ cried Mabel; ‘you make mistake, young massa.’

‘What does it signify what *you* think, old woman,’ returned Lionel, scornfully; ‘I say he *is* a thief, and I’ll have him put in prison. He has stolen my pin, and it was set with diamonds.’

‘Oh! you would not have Jack put in prison, brother, I’m sure,’ cried the little girl. ‘What would his poor mother say?—she would cry so, for she loves him so much.’

‘Go along with you,’ Lionel repeated, trying to push her and Mabel back; ‘I’ll not allow anybody to interfere with me. I’ll do as I please with my own servant.’

‘Indeed you shan’t, sir,’ cried Jack, now recovering himself a little, and rising up. ‘I’m not your *slave*, young sir; and I can tell you English boys are not to be treated like dogs.’

The other servants had by this time called Mr.

Brooksby ; and now entering the room, he asked, in a tone of deep concern, what was the matter.

Lionel was foremost in telling his tale ; and Jack let him do so, for he knew that he had a friend in the Squire, and that he would see that justice was done him.

' You have acted very wrong, Lionel, in striking the boy,' Mr. Brooksby said ; ' you ought not to have done that under any circumstances. I never allow a servant to be struck in my house ; and after all I am sure you will find the pin if you only have patience.'

' But he was so insulting to me, uncle.'

' Perhaps you provoked him by calling his honesty in question. However, let us hear no more of this. Jack, are you much hurt ?' he added, turning to the boy and examining his wound.

' Hurt ! no ; I scarcely touched him. He only made a great noise to make people think he was hurt,' cried Lionel.

' But here is a deep wound,' cried Mr. Brooksby : ' run, Mabel, to the housekeeper, and ask her for something to wrap it up with. Now, Lionel,' he added, ' go to the library, and wait there till I come to you. I must talk with you alone a little.'

' I shall not go from here till I have got my pin,' he replied, ' I value it very highly. It was my mother's gift.'

' There is no doubt it will be found if you will wait patiently. I desire that you do as I bid you.'

' Yes, it will be found in the possession of that young thief, and I should just like to detect him. He will make you believe he is as innocent as a lamb, I know.'

' I have not even seen the pin, sir,' cried Jack, making an effort to speak.

' 'Tis a falsehood,' exclaimed Lionel, furiously, ' I left it on the dressing-table, in the pincushion, and

no one else came into the room after. He acknowledged that himself.

‘He could not have left it there,’ said Jack, ‘or I must have seen it.’

‘I’ll not have any more said on either side now,’ cried Mr. Brooksby. ‘Lionel, once more I desire that you go quietly to the library, and wait there till I come to you.’

‘I don’t choose to go, sir,’ he answered; ‘I am not used to be ordered about, as if I were a servant. I am my own master.’

‘No, you are not your own master, Lionel; you are placed under my care, till you become of age. But I do not wish to enforce authority,’ Mr. Brooksby added; ‘I thought you would obey me from a sense of duty.’

The quiet, yet decided manner in which Mr. Brooksby spoke, made his nephew a little ashamed of himself; and he now walked out of the room. As he went along the passage, he happened to put his hand into his bosom, between the collar of his waistcoat and the front of his shirt, when, to his great surprise, he drew out the very pin he had accused poor Jack of stealing. It was evident that he had stuck it carelessly in his shirt-front, and that it had slipped out and fallen within his waistcoat; indeed, he remembered now, having attempted to stick it there. His conscience told him in a moment that it was his duty to go back and state the truth. It told him, also, that some apology was due to Jack for the manner in which he had treated him—conscience will speak to us, whether we will hearken to it or not—but Lionel Brooksby would not hearken: his pride revolted from the thought of confessing that he had been in the wrong, or even confessing that he could have been mistaken; and he had the meanness and the wickedness to think to himself—‘I will not let uncle know that I have found the

pin, but I'll hide it for a few days ; and then I'll pretend to find it accidentally.' So he slipped it hurriedly into his pocket.

Jack Honest would have scorned such a base action ; and so would any good-principled person.

When Mr. Brooksby joined his nephew in the library, he talked to him a good deal about the sin of giving way to his passions. He reminded him that anger had led to the first murder that was committed in the world ; and then he told him how wrong it was to accuse any one of the crime of thieving, without having very good reason for doing so. He related the incident which had first introduced Jack to him ; and he said he was sure a boy who could behave so nobly at one time, could not be guilty of a theft at another ; because the same principle which had led him to do the one honest act, must be his guide at all times.

Lionel attempted to excuse himself by saying that Jack had provoked him to strike him by being so saucy. Mr. Brooksby replied that he would talk to Jack about that when he was better. He had then left him, he said, very faint and ill from the blow and loss of blood. 'I am sure,' he added, 'that if Jack has been saucy, he will be honest enough to confess it, and he shall make an apology to you. I will not allow my servants to ill-treat you ; but then I feel that it is my duty to protect them from insult as well.'

CHAPTER X.

THE TRUTH COMES OUT.

JACK was ill for several days, and his mother was sent for, to nurse him. She was very much grieved to find him in such a state ; but she did not encourage any ill-feeling in him towards his young master. Jack declared that he would not be his servant any longer—that he would beg Mr. Brooksby to let him take his old place again, for no one had yet been found to fill it. His mother thought it would be best for him to do so ; but she told him that it was his duty to forgive the young gentleman, and to treat him with respect still. She said such conduct would not only be pleasing to his kind friends the squire and his lady, but that God would be pleased with him too. She read some texts from the Bible to him, which speak of the duty of forgiving our enemies, and returning good for evil ; and Jack listened to her patiently at last, though he was at first inclined to be very angry at having his honesty called in question.

‘ Avoid the beginning of evil ’ is a very wise proverb, and one we should do well to practise at all times. Jack, by his good mother’s advice, checked his inclinations to do what was wrong ; but Lionel, on the contrary, went on from one sin to another.

We before said that he determined on pretending to find his pin accidentally. That would have been very wrong, but that did not satisfy him ; he afterwards resolved on making it appear, after all, that Jack had stolen it ; so he found an opportunity of slipping it into a box of Jack’s, which stood in a sort of landing near his dressing-room.

He thought he was not seen by any one, but he was mistaken ; one person saw him do it, and that was the poor old black woman. She wondered what he

was about at the time, but she did not say any thing, as she saw he did not notice that she was so near.

Then, dear young reader, *God saw him*. God sees every wicked action we do, whether it be done in the dark or in the light, in secret or openly. That is a solemn thought.

Master Lionel thought his plan for making it seem that he was right and that Jack was guilty, was very clever, and when nothing was heard of the lost pin for three or four days, he proposed that Jack's box should be searched. He said that if the boy were innocent he had nothing to fear. This seemed reasonable, and Mr. and Mrs. Brooksby consented to it. They were both very unhappy about the affair, for they loved Lionel for his father's sake, and they were much attached to Jack too, though he was only their servant.

Jack was as bold as a lion in this matter: he said he did not care how much his box was roused over, for he was sure there was nothing in it but what was his own. However, when the search was made, and the pin was found in it, he was in great distress, and so was his poor mother. Jack was himself too much amazed to speak; but Mrs. Honest, who knew a little more of the wickedness of the world than he did, said that she was sure there had been some foul play. She said she would risk her life on Jack's honesty.

Mr. and Mrs. Brooksby looked as if they did not know what to think. They could not suppose it possible that their nephew could be guilty of so base an action, as that of trying to ruin the boy's character when he knew him to be innocent; so they really began to doubt Jack a little.

The poor boy lay on his bed completely overwhelmed with terror, and his mother sat by his side, crying bitterly. Every body in the house loved Jack, and every body was concerned on his account, except Master Lionel, who stood looking on very much pleased, and every now and then making a taunting speech at him.

At last, however, Mabel came forward. She had not said a word before, but she could not keep silent any longer. 'Me no like bring young massa into trouble,' she now said, turning to Mr. Brooksby. 'But me no stand by and see dat poor boy called tief when he no tief. Me love young massa much—me loved his moder, and me nurse him when him little baby; but me know great God punish me if me not tell out truth. Me saw young massa slip someting in dat box de oder night. Me in massa's room. Me wondered what massa about; but me know now, me quite sure. Oh! me grieve to say it, but me must. Great God punish me else.'

The sudden paleness which came over Lionel's face, whilst Mabel was speaking, was noticed by every one present, and all eyes were turned upon him. He tried to speak, but his voice failed him; and he caught hold of his uncle's arm for support.

'This is a sad affair, Lionel,' said Mr. Brooksby, looking greatly concerned; 'but I must not screen you, when this poor boy's character is at stake.'

The culprit had not the hardihood to look Mabel in the face, and tell her she had told a falsehood; so he begged his uncle to go with him alone into another room. As he went along he tried to make up a story, in order to make his own conduct appear less black; but Mr. Brooksby saw through it all now. He did not speak angrily to him, however, he only seemed deeply grieved. He told him that it was as wicked for him to rob a poor boy of his good name, as it would have been for Jack to rob him of his valuable pin. 'Indeed, it is even worse to take away a person's good name than it is to take their property,' he added, 'for a good character is more valuable to us than anything, especially to a servant, who loses everything if he lose that. I hope you will take a lesson from it, and never be guilty of such base conduct any more.'

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

AFTER this affair, poor Jack found his home at the Hall far less happy than it used to be. Master Lionel took every opportunity of annoying him, and he often had it in his power to do so, though Jack was no longer his servant. We must say, that though Jack was thoroughly honest, and very kind and obliging to those who were kind and obliging to him, he did not bear injuries quite so patiently as he ought to have done. He was irritated under the ill treatment he received, and he sometimes said what would have been better left unsaid. This only made his situation more unpleasant, and roused Lionel's bad feelings still more ; so at last Jack, with tears in his eyes, begged Mr. Brooksby to let him try to get another place. The Squire and his lady were very sorry to part with him ; but when they saw he was really unhappy, they consented to his going, and they said they would try to find him a comfortable situation, and that his mother should live in her cottage the same.

Mrs. Honest was very sorry for Jack to leave Mr. Brooksby, but she did not object ; she said, however, that he must engage himself to any one else only till he was fourteen, then the little money she had put by would apprentice him to a business. She mentioned this plan to Mr. Brooksby, and he quite approved of it ; so he asked Jack what business he would like to follow. The boy said he thought he should like to be apprenticed to the same trade his father had followed : that was a saddler's,—so it was arranged that it should be so.

Little Rosa cried when she heard that Jack was going to leave them ; and Mabel and all the other servants were very sorry. Jack was sorry too ; for he did not like to part from all his kind friends, and above all, he did not like to be parted from his mother, for he could not come home to her every night in any other situation. However, he could not make up his mind to put up with Master Lionel's conduct. The young gentleman did not behave quite so bad to his uncle and aunt as he did to people he thought beneath him. He tried, too, to please them in some things, because he did not wish to be sent off to a boarding-school, where he knew he should not have so much liberty as he had at the Hall.

A near neighbour of Mr. Brooksby's took Jack into his service, and he was very kindly treated, but he was not quite happy ; he often longed for the pleasures he had before enjoyed. However, in little more than twelvemonths he became fourteen years old, and then he left his situation and entered on his apprenticeship. Mrs. Honest still remained at the cottage, and the Squire and his lady were as kind as ever to her ; and little Rosa and her nurse often came to spend an afternoon with her : but she did not recover her health—she did not get strong and well as she used to be. Jack longed for the time when he should have a home of his own to offer her, and when he should be able to save enough at his business to keep her comfortably, and a servant to wait on her, that she might not be wearied with any kind of work. That was the height of his ambition. But the widow said she did not wish to have nothing to do. She had been used to be employed all her life, and she thought people were much happier when they were employed than when they were doing nothing. Jack would only smile, and reply that he did not care how hard he worked himself ; he was

never happier than when he was at his work, he said, but he wanted to make a lady of her.

Jack's conduct gave his master so much satisfaction, and he became so fond of him, that he gave him half what he earned long before his term of apprenticeship was over. Then Jack began to put by money towards furnishing a house, and setting up in business for himself. He did not wish to have his house furnished very smartly, for he thought that would be unsuitable to his station; but he wished to have every thing in it that could make it comfortable for his dear mother. He wished also to set up business in or near his native village; for he thought it would be so pleasant to live amongst his old friends still.

Time flew rapidly on. Time will fly on, and little boys become tall men, sometimes in what seems a very little while. It was so with our hero, Jack Honest. But he has now attained the object he so long desired—a comfortable home for his mother, and a good business to support her with.

Here we must leave him, hoping that those of our young readers who have been interested in his story, will try to imitate his conduct, by practising honesty in the most extended meaning of the word, being assured that they will find it at all times the happiest and safest plan. For—

‘He that walketh uprightly walketh surely; but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.’—
Prov. x. 9.

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